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Chestnut Culture

E. A. RIEHL, Godfrey, Ill.

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U. S. Department of Agriculture.



Boone Chestnut, Two Years After Grafting.

The market for chestnuts is not likely to be fully supplied for many years, if ever. The prices for first class nuts are excellent. My crop this season (1917) sold readily in Chicago for 27½ to 30 cents per pound wholesale.

I know of no more promising horticultural proposition than chestnut growing. I have planted thousands of trees and am still planting, confident they will pay me better than anything else would. Lands too broken for cultivation can be planted to chestnut with great profit, and when the trees are large enough can be pastured. However, if chestnuts are planted on good orchard land and well cultivated, they will make better growth and produce profitable crops much sooner.

I have on my premises a native chestnut tree, planted in 1863, that is between 60 and 70 feet high, and 7 feet 6 inches in circumference. It has borne regular crops ever since coming into bearing. I make this statement simply as

ALL kinds of nuts are becoming more in demand as our population increases and the wild supply diminishes. Especially is this true since nuts are coming more and more into use as an article of food. In sections where the chestnut does not grow wild it is free of all insect pests or diseases. Even San Jose scale does not harm it. The chestnut blight, which threatens to wipe out all the chestnut forests, need not be feared where the chestnut does not grow in the surrounding forests, provided growers do not make the mistake of buying trees from Eastern nurseries where the blight has spread. In the forty years that I have grown chestnuts I have not seen a half dozen nuts that had a worm in them, nor do I think it likely that they will be introduced for many years to come. The native chestnut forests are too far away, and artificial plantings too few and scattered to form a bridge.

evidence that the chestnut will thrive in sections where the soil is right, that is, where there is good drainage and not underlaid with hard pan. The common American chestnut is too small and requires too long to come into bearing to be worthy of planting, especially as we have others that are larger, come into bearing earlier and are of fine quality.

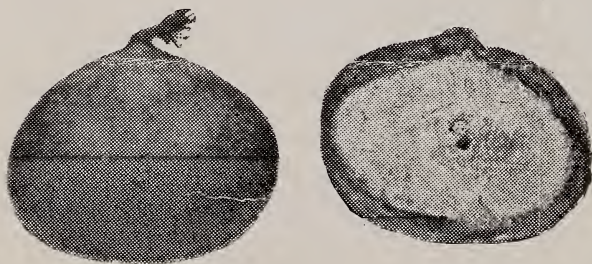
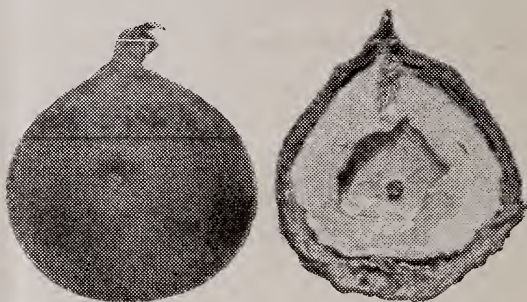
About thirty years ago I became interested in nut culture, procuring nuts from all parts of the country that I heard of as promising, and that could be procured, among them some twenty-five varieties of chestnut. Most of these were of Japan strain, and of too poor quality. The Paragon is a good nut but it has the fault of over-bearing so as to dwarf the tree and often causing it to die, also the burr does not open readily and to get the nuts they must be threshed or dug out by hand. For these reasons I do not grow or propagate it. The following varieties have been found better and are the ones I grow and recommend.

Boone.

Originated by the late Geo. W. Endicott, of Villa Ridge, Ill. In the spring of 1895 he fertilized blossoms of Japan Giant with pollen of the native American. The seed thus produced was planted in the spring of 1896 in rich soil. In the fall of 1897 one of the

trees grown from these seeds produced six burrs filled with nuts. This was named Boone. It has borne annually since, the following amounts: 1 lb., 3 lbs., 5 lbs., 6 lbs., 8 lbs., 12 lbs., 17 lbs., 25 lbs., 31 lbs., 43 lbs., 50 lbs., 56 lbs., *5 lbs., 80 lbs., 76 lbs., 140 lbs. Young trees often bear in the nursery row. See cut on front page which is true copy of photo of tree second year after being grafted. One of the earliest bearing and earliest ripening varieties we have. Nut large and of excellent quality. Tree a good grower and abundantly productive. Its only fault is that it is very hard to propagate.

*This small yield was due to hard freezing weather late in April, after growth had been made of ten to twelve inches and were in full bloom.



Progress

A seedling of Rochester, grown by me, and fruited for several years. The nut is large, of excellent quality. The tree is a good grower and excellent bearer; better than the older varieties. Am planting it largely.

Fuller.

Also a seedling of Rochester, grown by me. One of the best in quality of any cultivated chestnut. Tree a fine grower and good bearer. Worth extensive planting.



Rush Chinquapin.



Rush Chinquapin, in Nursery Row, Two Years from Bud.

HERE we have a little nut that should be planted by everyone who has room for a tree. It is a small nut of highest excellence, bears very young and profusely (see cut). Too small for commercial planting, but nothing better can be planted for the young folks.

Do not plant chestnuts, or any other nut, expecting to get trees that will bear nuts of the same quality. They will vary just as much as apple, pear, peach or any other fruit. It does not pay to plant seedlings, unless it is the intention to bud or graft later.

I am often asked about other nuts. In brief I would say: Soft shell almonds have proved entire failure in the Mississippi valley. The Persian or English walnut is not hardy in the cen-

tral West. I have tried repeatedly and known others to do so for the last sixty years, but have known but one instance where a tree ever came to bear any nuts, and in this case the tree has since been killed by winter's cold, or by the warm sun after being frozen.

None of the Southern pecans will thrive here. I have procured and planted some twenty of the best Southern varieties, but they nearly always are killed by the first cold weather, our seasons being too short for them to mature their growth. Occasionally a tree will survive, but have never known one to bear well.

Thomas Walnut

This variety of the black walnut was originated in Pennsylvania. A tree procured fifteen years ago, and others propagated and grafted onto wild stocks, have bore well. Nut large, kernel large and of excellent quality, cracking quality excellent, ninety per cent coming out in halves and quarters, producing ten pounds of meat to the bushel, which sell at fifty to eighty cents per pound. I think this one of the best nuts to plant in this section for profit.

I am not in the nursery business, and have no other nursery stock to sell.

PRICES :

Boone Chestnut,	-	-	-	\$1.50 each
Progress Chestnut,	-	-	-	1.50 each 1.00
Fuller Chestnut,	-	-	-	1.50 each
Rush Chinquapin,	-	-	-	1.00 each 1.50
Thomas Black Walnut.	-	-	-	1.00 each

The above prices include packing when order amounts to \$5 or more.

Nurserymen and large planters please write for special quotations.

Address all orders to

E. A. RIEHL, Godfrey, Illinois.

Lancaster, Pa., Nov. 1, 1915.

Dear Mr. Riehl :—

You have them all skinned to a finish on fine chestnuts. The growing of chesnuts now in localities not likely to get the blight, offers very attractive inducements. I think I would prefer Progress chestnuts to any other of your seedlings. This has the real look and quality of the American sweet chestnut, and its light color makes it more attractive I think. Fuller would be my second choice.

Very truly yours,
J. F. JONES.

United States Department of Agriculture,
Bureau of Plant Industry.

Washington, D. C., March 23, 1915.

Dear Mr. Riehl :—

The chestnuts which you sent us about the middle of October were held in cold storage until about a month ago, when we went over them carefully. Several of us agreed that Fuller is the most delicately flavored of any. It is a little sweeter, though not so large as Rochester. It has a brighter color and is therefore a little more attractive in appearance. Apparently the nuts are the best keepers of any in the lot, for although they have stood on my desk for fully a month the kernels are now soft enough to be eaten readily.

With kindest regards, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

C. A. REED,

In charge of nut culture investigations.